



P R L S M





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# **The PRISM**

***An Artistic and Literary Experience***

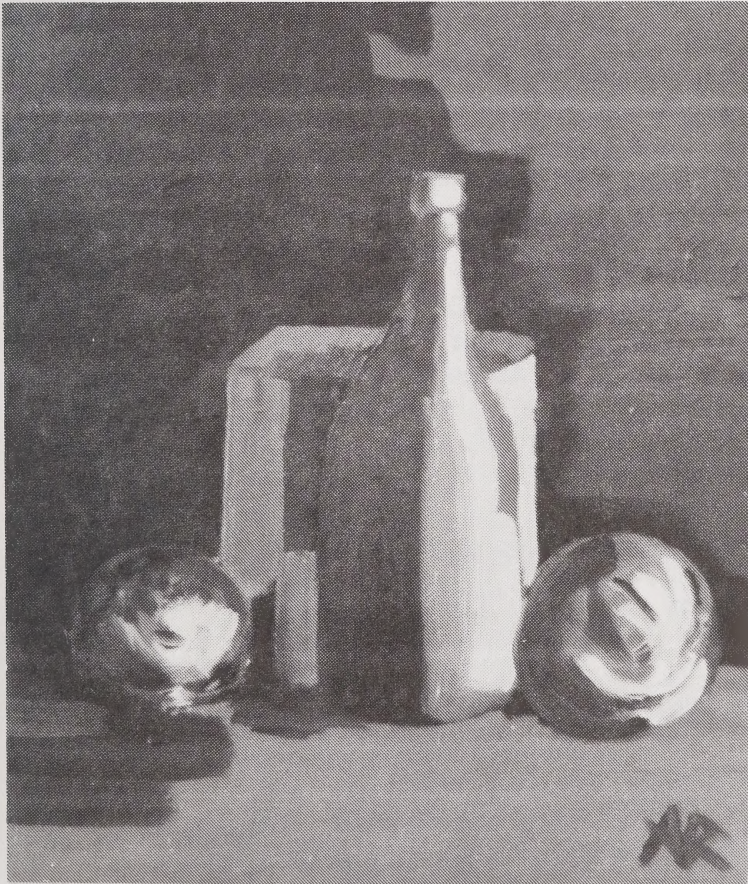




## ***Dedication***

The 1994 edition of the PRISM is dedicated to two important people at Peace College. Dr. Sally Buckner, our own poet extraordinaire, who has taught many of us to express ourselves through words and Mr. Richard Rottschafer, who has artistically touched the lives and hearts of many Peace girls. We dedicate this to you both with love and smiles.

– L.M.



– April Robbins

***Peace College PRISM***  
**1994**

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The PRISM would like to express our deepest gratitude to Mrs. Sherry Boykin and Ms. Carolyn Parker for all their help and guidance.



## *Call Of The Tracks*

You can't ignore the call of the tracks.  
 One night I lay in bed  
 a nice warm bed of straw and feathers  
 beside a nice woman  
 who drew every breath in deep as she slept  
 and through the open window  
 I heard it:  
 the low growl of it far away  
 the closer-up jostle of the cars  
 like friends poking you in the ribs for fun  
 and laughing  
 and the scream  
 so high-pitched and smoky-sad.  
 It came through every night after  
 and every night I lay awake  
 and waited for that song  
 of the steel wheels and the whistle  
 until I had to get up.  
 I walked to and closed the window  
 quiet as anything.  
 I picked up my shoes from the floor  
 and my shirt limp across the chair  
 and slid out the door  
 through the gate  
 past the sweet alfalfa fields and sugar beets  
 following the line of the tracks  
 and the last trace of its breath in the sky.

– Rachael Cleverly

## *Unity's Last Stand*

*(Dedicated to the Sophomore Class of 1994)*

Brilliant red petals  
 bathed in tears  
 during a circular communion  
     carried by the angelic white creature  
         that wraps itself around the fountain  
 while lifting its voice in reverberating harmony  
     pledging love and loyalty to those who witnessed  
 a multitude of individual minds  
 for a small time at least  
 become one.

– Lindsay Mize

## *Kitty Hawk, North Carolina*

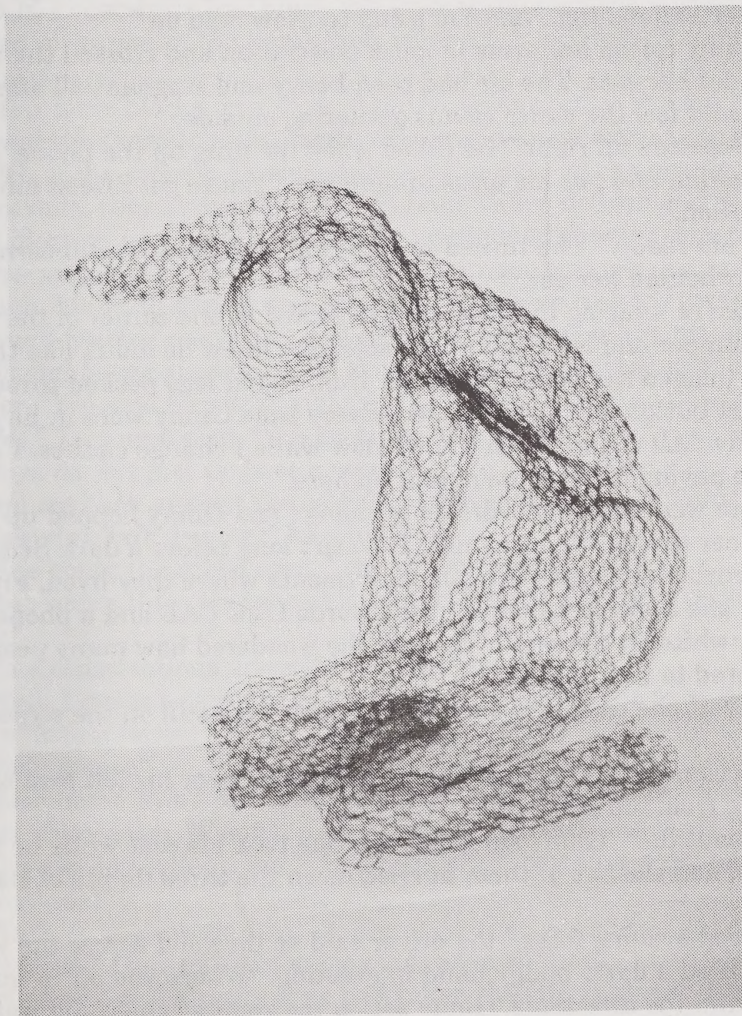
I remember summers,  
bright and happy times  
spent with grandmother  
playing Russian Bank, Canasta, and Rummy  
big-band music,  
lessons in lady-like behavior  
and stories  
of long ago people.  
Clothes, flapping all the while,  
furled and bathed in soft salty air  
on triple lines outside.  
Savory mid-day dinners:  
roast lamb, mint jelly, red tomatoes  
bursting with perfect flavor,  
slices teamed with  
cold, crisp cucumbers,  
corn-on-the-cob,  
its tiny teeth brushed with butter, salt and pepper  
green beans, new potatoes,  
and sweet, deep-red watermelon.  
Late afternoon back-seat rides to see  
the monument  
to man's first flight,  
taking in the sights of  
Southern Shore soundside,  
lush, green vines,  
live-oak trees draped and dressed  
in Spanish moss.  
Hushed exclamations at sightings of  
white-tailed doe with fawns  
staring motionless, the stillness invaded at twilight.  
And, as shadows fall,  
reading by the tall lamp  
standing guard,  
casting yellow light  
on black printed words,  
while Grandfather chuckles and muses,  
visiting his friends — pages  
in the *Saturday Evening Post*.  
Nightgowned, I wait for  
goodnight hugs and sweet-dreams kisses  
As I hear adult voices gently banter,  
windows closing, rain and  
lightning, shutters banging, breakers  
crashing,  
evening prayers of thankful praise  
for the peace inside.



## *Mamma*

Mamma pushed the wisp of blond hair from her deep blue eyes and she delicately hung a red, shiny ball on the Christmas tree. People say I look like her. I hope so. To me, she is beautiful. Not beautiful like the plastic-looking models in magazines; but beautiful like a warm feeling. The kind of feeling you get when your family gathers by the fire to sing carols and to laugh at egg-nog mustaches.

– Megan Downing



– Jodie Pearce



## *An Evening Out*

They hadn't planned to take to a cab, but Tom's car overheated on the way home from work and he didn't trust the '87 Corolla to last another minute without a mechanic. Ginny protested, saying they could go out another time, it wasn't that important. Anyway, taxis are silly, they belong in New York City, not Salt Lake—dinner at the Waldorf and then to catch a Broadway show—things like that.

"I think the Waldorf is in San Francisco," Tom said, rifling through the phone book.

"Well, the Ritz, then. Aren't taxis pretty expensive?"

Tom nodded absent mindedly and ran his long finger down the left side of the T page. "I promised to take you out tonight," he said, picking up the receiver and dialing, "and I'm going to. Now hold on."

Ginny raised her arms in mock frustration and crossed the room to the closet for her coat. The air had been heavy and stagnant all afternoon, and she could feel the storm clouds gathering outside.

"Gepetto's all right?" he asked when he hung up the phone. He came up from behind and put his arms around her. "You've got fifteen minutes to get ready, hon."

"I am ready." She turned toward him and placed a stubborn lock of brown hair behind her ear.

"You're wearing that dress?" He picked at one corner of the blue-flowered jumper and let it fall to her side. She knew he didn't like the way the fabric hugged her body or how her thin, round legs peeked through the undone last button when she walked. Every time Ginny wore it, he eyed her suspiciously. "All right. Watch the window while I change clothes. I don't want to be paying for time we're still up here."

Tom went into the bedroom to change and Ginny hopped up on the couch to peer through the curtains. It wasn't long before a dark Sedan pulled up to the curb outside the Wingate Apartments where they lived. From the third floor she could just make out the words UTE CAB and a phone number painted in white on the roof of the car; she wondered how many people had ever bothered to look there.

"Tom!" she called absent-mindedly, her eyes still on the street. "He's here."

He came out of the bedroom with a jacket over his left arm and a red tie hanging from his neck.

"Beautiful." Ginny said, smiling. She took his coat while he tied himself up, and the two of them hurried down the three flights of stairs to the street.

"Good evening folks," the driver said as they slid across the vinyl seats. He lifted a dark, pudgy hand in greeting. "Where you off to tonight?" Tom gave him the directions. Ginny sat on the right so she could watch the driver's face; black people were sort of a novelty in her white-bread world, and she viewed him with benign curiosity. She took note of his weathered brown eyes, the flat curly hair that crept from beneath a navy blue beret, his hands that were dark brown on one side and fair at the palms.



They pushed away from the curb and slid gracefully into the left lane of traffic. Before long they had left their white-collar neighborhood and come into the "real world." The car wound its way through narrow streets, past red brick apartment buildings, an office or two, a row of chintzy antique stores and pawn shops with locked-cages windows, all closed for the night. Ginny could still remember when O.P. Shaggs was a successful grocery chain; now all that remained was this corner market, with its hand-lettered sign and faded Pepsi-Co logo painted on the north wall. She watched two brown-eyed Tongan boys sitting on the curb beneath a lamppost come near, then swing away from view behind the cab.

Ginny had what Tom called a "morbid fascination" with the old parts of town—these places where nobody lived but a few old women in house-coats, men in undershirts and black suspenders. Most of the lawns hadn't been mowed all summer; the dandelions spread tall and fat, choking the grass.

A few more blocks, and they would be downtown to the malls, the theaters, and the fanciest restaurants. She would know when they got there by the width of the streets. Everybody knew the story of the pioneers: After all their travails, they arrived in the Salt Lake Valley determined to make the desert blossom as a rose. Brigham Young planned the city streets so that a four-horse wagon team could turn around without backing up. As the city grew, though, his wide streets and orderly blocks gave way to cramped alleyways and twisted roads that ambled up to the base of the mountain.

"Sit tight—we almost there," the driver said, smiling up into his rear view mirror. "You said Gepetto's right?"

"Yes," Tom muttered. "You do know how to get there."

"Sure do. It's just up here a ways."

Tom sat back against the cold vinyl and motioned for Ginny to lean in. "See how slow he's driving?" he whispered.

"He's going the speed limit," she whispered back.

"But watch this...He takes his foot off the gas for every yellow light a mile away."

"So he's a conscientious driver!" Ginny whispered.

"Well, I guess he's got to make a living somehow," he said, his low voice full of intimidation.

"Tom, please!"

"Your name Tom?" the driver asked. Ginny blushed; she had meant to keep her voice down. "I've got a boy Thomas, fourteen years old next month. He's already taller'n me." He chuckled. "They sure grow up fast. You two got any kids?"

"No."

"Not yet," Ginny said, glancing sideways at Tom.

"We'd be there already if he had taken the Old Highway, you know." He tapped an impatient finger on the seat ahead of him. "I don't trust him," he breathed. Ginny placed a hand on his arm to keep him calm. "I mean it. There's no reason for him to talk this way, unless it's to cost us more money."

"I don't know what you're getting so upset about," Ginny whispered. "He's a nice man. Besides, aren't we out to have a good time?"

"Excuse me," Tom said to the driver, clearing his throat and regaining his usual authoritative tone. "We've changed our minds about dinner. Could you drop us off at the cafe on the next corner?"

"Bill and Nada's, huh? You sure? You're awful dressy for that place."

"This'll be fine, thank you."

The driver pulled into the parking lot of a brightly lit, poorly kept diner. Ginny smiled apologetically as she climbed out of the cab. Tom handed the man two crumpled bills, a five and a ten. "This should cover it," he said dryly.

"Yes sir." He stuffed the money into a side pocket. "My guess is, you'll have a hard time getting another cab out here this time on a Friday night."

"Thanks. I'll remember that." He slammed the door without meaning to and walked inside where Ginny was waiting for him.

"What did you do that for?" she demanded as he came toward her. "He was fine. He was doing his job."

"Come on, Ginny, you're not that naive." Tom snickered and reached for the pay phone on the back wall. "Hand me the phone book, please." He thumbed through until he found another taxi service. He dialed, spoke for a minute, then hung up. He scanned the page for another number.

"Well?" Ginny asked.

"All their cars are in use. Go buy yourself a Coke while I figure this out."

"He's still sitting outside, Tom. He can see us through the window."

"So what if he can?"

"I don't know why you always have to make things so difficult," she said, turning and walking to the door. "I'll meet you in the car."

Outside it had begun to rain in small, inconsistent drops, just enough to freckle the windows of the rust-colored cab. Ginny pulled the handle and slid into the back seat.

"Just a pit stop," she said with a gracious half-smile. Then, leaning forward as if confiding a secret, she apologized for Tom. "He doesn't mean anything," she explained. "He's just tired from working so much."

"I figured that's all it was, ma'am." He nodded his head patiently and kept his eye on Tom as he slammed the phone down, shoved his hands in his pockets and followed Ginny back into the car.

"How long have you been driving a cab?" Ginny asked, after a long and rather self-conscious silence.

"Going on twenty years now."

"You must know the city well, then," she said. She smiled, having struck a rather benign topic of conversation. "Tom and I just moved down from the Avenues. It's bit of an adjustment after living in the suburbs like that."

"I been here my whole life...." His voice softened, lost itself in private reflection. Tom watched him maneuver brown hand over brown hand as he turned onto State Street. He continued, in explanation: "I grew up here. My daddy had a mechanic shop three blocks west of Liberty Park. I swear, there weren't a thing that man couldn't fix. I'm pretty handy myself, thanks to



what he taught me.”

Ginny turned her face to the window and began to count the beads of water that formed and ran together on the pane. “The city’s changed a lot in a lifetime,” she said quietly, trying not to lose count.

“I ain’t even that old. The world sure is a different place, though, you’re right about that.” He leaned his head back against the seat for emphasis. “I tell you, my parents wouldn’t stand for nothing. When we mouthed off, we got smacked upside the head—and you best believe we learned respect fast. But the kids today don’t respect anyone. Myself, I been robbed twice.”

“Really?” Ginny sat up.

“And I ain’t going to let it happen again. I got myself some protection, a ‘piece of mind,’ if you know what I mean.” He leaned over and tapped the glove box with satisfaction. “Next time it’s not going to be so easy. Some punk threatens me with a gun, I’ll point one right back at him. There ain’t no law what says his life is more important than mine.”

Tom laughed smugly and sarcastically. “Sure. Fight violence with violence—that solves things, all right.” He rubbed his temples with his first two fingers. “That’s just great.”

“Listen, next time you have a pistol stuck in your face and three kids and a wife at home, then you preach to me about what solves things.”

“Tom, please.” She touched his arm. “He’s right; you don’t know....”

He looked at her, incredulous, but said nothing. The car slowed patiently to a halt at the intersection of State and 13th South. The glow of the red stoplight shone through the windshield onto the driver’s face, the color magnified by the raindrops on the glass. Ginny calmed herself with the steady hum of the motor; Tom smiled faintly, imagining the driver as a fat Indian chief, minus the head dress. The rain continued in a slow, steady drizzle. The light changed and the cab lurched forward again.

“Right there—right behind that building on the left, you see a woman was raped there last month. No lie. I’m sure you seen it, it was all in the papers. I tell you, I’ve got no respect for a man that’d hurt a lady on purpose. It’s a sick world.”

They all heard about it—everyone had. The story had been plastered all over the papers and the TV news for weeks: **SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS-WOMAN ASSAULTED NEAR DOWNTOWN APARTMENT COMPLEX**, read the headlines. **NO SUSPECTS FOUND**. The crime became a rally-cry for local women’s groups and an embarrassment to politicians bidding for reelection in the fall. Tom had seemed obsessed with the case; he insisted Ginny take a self-defense class from the community college, and ticked off frightening statistic after statistic until she finally agreed. “It’s because I love you, honey,” he had said, stroking her hair. “I want you to be safe. I won’t always be there to protect you.”

“Oh come on,” she joked. “Who in their right mind would want to attack me? It’s not like I flash cash around or anything.”

“You know it’s not money they want.”

His tone was so curt, so abrupt, that she didn’t know if she ought to take it personally. Of course, she knew he was right—she knew “what they

were after"—and it scared her. But those things happened to other people, not Ginny. She felt sorry for them, of course, but she is not a victim. She didn't want to feel like a victim before anything happened.

"That's why you need to take the class," Tom argued. "They'll teach you how not to be a victim. Please—for me. I don't want to lose you."

So she went to the class, early one Saturday morning. She walked into a basement ballet studio filled with women in their teens through upper sixties. Mothers brought their daughters, young girls giggled in the corners with best friends. The instructor, a square-shaped woman with spiky brown hair, leaned against the barre and whistled the group to attention with her first two fingers.

"Ladies?" she hollered. "This is not the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers; if you're expecting punch and cookies, try the next door down. Nobody? All right, then, let's get to work." She slapped her fist into an open palm. She spoke quickly and with no inflection. "Your best defense is confidence, girls. These people thrive on the weak, so attitude is everything." Her eyes scanned the first few rows of women sitting Indian-style on the hardwood floor and paused on Ginny. "You," she said, pointing. "Come up here." Ginny did as she was told, though she could feel her face burning.

"I'm a man doing something that makes you uncomfortable. Tell me no."

"No," she said quietly.

"Your posture is good. Look me in the eye and say it louder."

"No."

"Louder!"

Her throat tightened and she could feel every eye in the room fixed intently on her. "No." She spit the word out firmly, teeth clenched, and with every ounce of resentment she could muster.

"Sit down." The instructor shifter her weight to the other foot and scratched her forehead. "Nobody said you had to be polite," she chuckled. "I hope you're not going to say please and thank you as he's holding the knife to your throat."

The women around her snickered. Someone sitting behind her tapped her on the shoulder. "I know, honey," the woman whispered.

Ginny slipped out of the room a few minutes later when the class stood up to practice defensive kicks and arm blocks. She spent the next two hours at the mall, wandering in and out of shops on all four floors. She couldn't go home to Tom if he knew she hadn't stayed.

The cab turned a slow corner onto Huntsman Drive. The broad street was lit by old fashioned street lamps spaced evenly between oaks. Ginny lifted her head from the window and looked around. She could see Gepetto's on the right hand corner of after the next stoplight.

"Thank you," she said as the cab slowed and stalled in front of the restaurant. Tom dug another ten from his pocket, then hurried up the cobblestone walk way, past the skinny fruit trees with their all-year white Christmas lights, to the red door. Ginny took a step, then glanced behind her. The cab was still there—he seemed to be waiting for something. The driver smiled slowly and raised a brown hand good-bye. Both he and Ginny remained fixed



in place a moment longer, and then, as if on cue, the taxi slipped away and Ginny turned and ran to catch up with Tom, who stood at the door with his hands stuffed in his pockets.

– *Rachael Cleverly*



– *Joy Gillis*

*Diablo*

As if in a vision  
 I can see him  
 Spotted black and white  
 Short spiked mane  
 Rat tail  
 All the characteristics  
 of an original Appaloosa  
 like the ones of the Nez Perce  
 He walks slowly towards me  
 I feel his soft lips  
 as he takes the carrot gently from my hand  
 I slip the leather halter on his head  
 looping the lead rope around his neck  
 tying it to the other side  
 Onto his back I leap  
 He dances beneath me  
 Across the pasture we gallop  
 I feel the freedom and speed  
 exhilarating  
 Lost for a moment in a different time  
 when Indians lived freely on the plains  
 I slip off his back  
 remove the halter  
 walk away  
 Reality is upon me  
 He follows  
 nudges my back  
 as if to say it's OK  
 my one true friend

— Jenna Allen

*Cormorant Cliffs*

Gawk, go the gulls above.  
 The thunder frightens me as I gaze out to the ships on the horizon.  
 It's cold. Too cold. My blood rushes roughly like the white-capped waves  
 below.

I feel the wind carry the salt to my face.  
 Without wanting, I become aware of the stinging.  
 The rough rocks sliding under my feet as I walk—  
 Falling... Hopelessly falling to their grave.

I, too, must go to a watery grave.  
 There is no other way out.  
 For I've reached the top and the end of the world.



As I drop, the gulls soar around me.  
 As to lift me to safety.  
 But as I hit the waves below,  
 the only thing lifted is my soul.

– *Jen Thrailkill*

### ***Pussy Footing Around***

Under the flowing willow tree  
 I sit and watch her.

Small wisps of green,  
 camouflaging soft pastels of  
 white, grey, and orange.

She slowly approaches,  
 closing in on the target.

Then stops,  
 rises on her haunches,  
 lowers her head,  
 shimmies,  
 and flies through the air.

Caught.

Now confident,  
 she flips the small lifeless toy,  
 throws the fluffy mouse across the lawn,  
 dashes after it,  
 watches,  
 swings,  
 then taps.

She soon recognizes its unwillingness to move,  
 and walks away,  
 content.

Then she stops once more,  
 her green eyes gazing at me.

Walks over,  
 and innocently lies beside me.

Her soft purr echoing  
 through her small body.

I just sit there caressing  
 her soft, warm fur and remember,  
 I once ran through the grass  
 chasing invisible friends, too.

– *Ivy Slade*

## *Letting Go*

2:00 was not usually the time of day that I arrived home from work, but on that cold Thursday afternoon, January 21, 1971, Terry had been sick for a couple of days, and it didn't look like he was improving. Breathing had become so difficult for him that it was necessary for him to remain in a nearly upright position. I did the best I could to comfort my husband — rubbing his aching legs, moving pillows, adding blankets and taking them away — but nothing seemed to help.

Terry had been born with a hole in his heart, a condition which was not discovered until age 15. The best cardiologists were consulted; the condition involved his lungs, and the only hope was a complete heart and lung transplant, which was not being done at that time. It was not until June, 1966, after we had been dating about one year, that he told me the news; he had not wanted me to love him out of pity. When Terry proposed, we both knew our time together would be limited, but now, with Terry only 23, and being two days short of one and a half years of marriage, it was too soon for the unspoken we were facing.

I had had the afternoon off on Wednesday, and he had remained in bed most of the day. The night was difficult; there was little sleep for either of us. Reluctantly, on Thursday morning I kissed him good-bye and left for my job as a bank teller. I stopped at the bedroom door and told him, "I'll be back at lunch. Call me if you need me before then," but his response was barely audible. Terry sat Indian-style on the bed, elbows on his knees, and held his head in his hands. The congestion that surrounded his heart was so heavy that lying down made breathing impossible. As I drove to work, I remembered the last time Terry had been in the hospital in March, 1969. He lost 17 pounds during that week's stay, fifteen of which was fluid build-up due to heart failure. The words Terry spoke before he left there were echoing in my mind: "I'll never come back here again."

Upon arriving home at noon, I found Terry to be worse and decided to return to work only long enough to balance out my window. I had told only one supervisor about Terry's condition, so my co-workers found my leaving for a "flu sick husband" to be rather strange. Their explanation would come soon enough.

I hurried home, relieved to be with him, but anxious about what I was afraid was happening. Although I knew he did not want to go to the hospital, I begged him, "Please let me call the doctor," but he insisted upon waiting until his father could be reached. Terry's father, whose home was in Charlotte, was a lobbyist for Southern Bell, and worked in Raleigh Monday through Friday during the legislative session. It would be 6:00 before we could reach him in his hotel room.

During the eternity between 2:00 and 6:00, I did all that I could to comfort Terry. He wanted nothing to eat or drink. As they had in the past, his legs ached, so I rubbed them, but that seemed to offer very little relief. Changes in position were minimal, as he could only breathe sitting up, and he was also quite weak.

At 6:00, just as predicted, I was able to reach Daddy, who, being only four blocks away, arrived quickly. In spite of his attempts to be calm, I was



aware that Daddy was feeling the same nervousness that I was experiencing. After he had made a couple of phone calls, an ambulance arrived. The paramedics helped Terry onto the stretcher, and seemed to be trying desperately to get him to lie down before leaving. My frustration level was beginning to show as I rather curtly instructed them to "leave him alone. He has to sit up or he can't breathe." With that they made their precarious trip from our bedroom to the ambulance, all the way afraid they might lose their patient at the next turn or bump.

Daddy decided that he would follow in his car, so I climbed into the ambulance and saw what looked like a miniature hospital. One of the few things that looked familiar was the oxygen mask, which was placed on Terry to give him some much needed air. I had to remain in the passenger seat of the ambulance so as not to get in the way, but kept a close eye on the paramedic as he took my husband's vital signs. The ride from our duplex on Clark Avenue to Rex hospital, then at the corner of St. Mary's Street and Wade Avenue, was short, for which I was thankful.

Dr. Umphlett had been the doctor whom Terry saw in Raleigh, but on this particular evening, his partner, Dr. Ferdon, was taking calls. He met us in the emergency room, and worked quickly to get Terry to the cardiac unit. By 7:30, Daddy and I were allowed to make a brief visit, since visiting hours and lengths are strictly adhered to in the cardiac and Intensive Care units. There were hugs and only a few words before Daddy and I left to pick up Terry's shaving kit and get a bite to eat.

Upon our return to the hospital, we found the doors to the cardiac unit closed, and no visitors were being allowed in for the 9:00 visit. The doors to the unit were big double doors which did not quite meet, and the space between them was just enough for me to observe the activity taking place in the hall. Nurses were hurrying out of the last room on the left, Terry's room. I paced back and forth in front of those heavy doors, feeling helpless, as I knew something was desperately wrong.

I have no idea how much time went by before Dr. Ferdon walked slowly through those doors. He was a tall, slender man with a quiet nature and he spoke softly as he told us, "I'm afraid I have some bad news."

An endless stream of tears began, and I screamed "NO!", hoping that I could change the news the doctor was giving us. The explanation of how Terry had died fell on deaf ears. The incredible pain I was feeling seemed to be all I could focus on at that moment. The doctor asked us if we would like to go back and see Terry. Daddy declined, but I walked down the long hall to say my final good-byes.

I stepped slowly into the room and found him at rest for the first time in several days. He no longer struggled to breathe or winced from the pain of his aching legs, but lay still in a peaceful slumber. "I love you," I said as I kissed him good night and held tightly onto his hand for just another moment before I made my way back into the hall, and found a kind nurse waiting to take me to the chapel. Before she left me there, she asked if there was anything I needed.

I replied, "Only my husband."

*- Carol Parker*

**Women**  
*February 24, 1994*

What is this state we  
 Live as women?  
 We remain dormant  
 Not knowing who we are  
 Nor where we came  
 Always our voices are  
 Blocked—  
 And the ones we do  
 Hear are somehow  
 Made poor examples of.  
 The few that we recognize  
 Are still dormant and they do nothing,  
 They are the ones making it hard  
 For the few who  
 Scream silently — over and over inside  
 Fighting to  
 Find what state we live in.

Are we blessed or  
 Cursed as Women—  
 We care and we  
 Nurture — For what cause?  
 So we can help raise  
 More Women who don't know the state we live in?

— *Kimberly Starbuck*



— *April Robbins*



## *Morning Glories*

Without dreaming  
I can see  
her coming home  
weary,  
dressed in  
the dark blue business suit  
with the vibrant red blouse  
and carrying a stack of work  
she brought home;  
never too tired  
to help with  
finishing touches  
on my homemade  
flour volcano  
for science class.

Without dreaming  
I can feel her  
arms around me,  
warm and weightless  
with lilac  
perfume lingering  
in the air,  
her soft hands,  
freshly lotioned,  
caressing my face,  
letting me know  
all my fears and worries  
are like a  
black cape  
being lifted  
from me.

Without dreaming  
I can taste  
smooth sweet chocolate  
morsels dissolving  
in my mouth  
made by those  
tender hands  
and smell  
the roasting  
golden turkey;  
my mouth waters.

Without dreaming  
I can hear her  
calling  
from the living room,  
her voice  
flowing  
through the upstairs  
like a meadow of  
heavenly blue  
morning glories  
dancing in  
fresh spring  
air.

– *Renee Jarrett*

*Joli*

The train is still rolling  
while she's jumping out  
onto the platform at the  
other end of the station —

It can only be Joli.

The heavy black Dock Martins,  
her hair, dyed orange-red, way up in the air  
and the Scottish-plaid shoulderbag  
dangling from her shoulder —  
It can only be Joli.

Letting her voice fly through the crowd  
telling me about the cute guy she met on her way home,  
her excellent math grade,  
the fancy socks she just bought,  
her new wall design,  
and how she for sure is going to start her diet  
this weekend —

It can only be Joli.

And once she's standing in front of me,  
with her red cheeks and sparkling green-brown eyes,  
filling the air with Ananja  
and the scent of cherry-lollipop,  
hugging and squeezing me till I have to gasp for breath —

It can only be my best friend.

— *Katja Buhler*



— *Kathy Templeton*



## *To Dance*

Large, muscle-making machines, tables, and physical therapists all dressed in khaki pants and white knit shirts surround me. The stale, repetitive environment intimidates me. I sit on one of the beige vinyl covered tables, feet dangling. I look at the weight machines and wonder if the therapy will be able to fix my injured hip and if it will hurt. I remind myself to tell the therapist that as a dancer I have to keep my turn-out; the therapy cannot interfere with ballet. The longer I wait for the therapist, the more nervous and filled with uncertainty I become.

A tall, dark, young woman with curly brown hair in the uniform khaki pants and white shirt walks over to my table, pulls the curtain closed and begins firing questions concerning my injury. As soon as she realizes the injury is dance-related, disapproval fills her hazel eyes. As the evaluation continues, the lecture begins on why ballet is inherently bad on dancers' bodies and why I should stop dancing. I feel defensive and near tears.

As I lie on the table doing the required exercises, the therapist asks me "Do you plan to keep dancing or get well?"

Stunned and panicking inside I ask, "Do I have to choose?" The therapist responds by saying that ballet is not natural and dancers' turnout, preferably a one-hundred-and-eighty-degree-line made by the feet, puts too much strain on the hips. She tells me if I continue to dance I will ruin my body. "Eventually," she says, "all dancers are going to end up in the position you are in. It is better to just not start."

The therapist continues teaching me exercises to alleviate the pain of the strained ligament in my hip, but as she does so she makes fun of me. "Stand naturally," she commands. I stand with my heel touching, feet forming a relaxed ninety degrees. "Naturally, I said," she looks up at me from her squatted position on the ground and realizes her mistake of logic. "Well, I guess that is natural for you. Do the exercises parallel if you can." She says it as if I am incapable of not turning my feet out. Appalled I reflect on the training I have received from experienced ballet teachers who, knowing, about anatomy are careful to "train without strain." They know what is harmful and what strengthens our bodies.

As I get ready to get on the weight machine I ask what type of patients they see at the clinic. "We don't have any dancers, mostly runners." Angrily but calmly I ask of she recommends that they stop running when they become injured. Obviously she does not see where the question is leading because she answers "No." I become even more angry because runners run on pavement, which is bad on one's joints and something any dancer knows better than to do. We dance on suspended floors which protect us. I was stunned. How can she tell runners it is okay for them to run on a surface that wreaks havoc on their bodies, but tell me not to dance and belittle me for dancing? I begin to dislike this hard woman.

My face becomes hot with anger and wet with tears of loss and shame. One moment I feel the love of my life being snatched away and become angry. A moment later I feel embarrassed for having engaged in such a reckless art, but wonder why would God create through human mind and

body something so beautiful as ballet if it is so hazardous.

From physical therapy I go to my ballet class at Meredith College. I felt guilty for being there. Maybe, I think to myself, as an injured dancer I should sit this class out, but decide to go ahead. Because I'm late I throw myself into the middle of a class in progress. I realize how dangerous it is, but if I give ballet up I might as well do all I can for as long as I can. I am frustrated; being late causes me to be lost and sloppy.

"Dear God," I ask, "Is it a mistake to continue dancing? Maybe I should not dance; maybe I should quit immediately, but, Lord—I can't. I may not be the best dancer physically, but in my heart I am a DANCER."

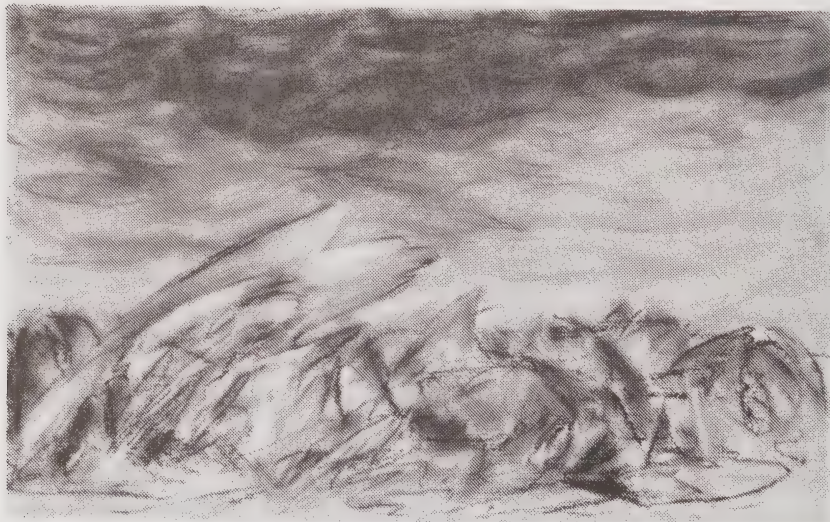
The class continues and the effort of keeping up physically quiets my troubled mind. The teacher gives us a new combination and it looks difficult; I fear that it is beyond me. I know that in a class of former professional dancers to whom this is a second nature, I will be humiliated. My face burns with anticipated shame before I begin.

"Second group!" the teacher yells. "5,6,7,8!" She yells out verbal cues to the combination the first time we run through it, but not the second, third, or the fourth.

Halfway through the second run I realize I am dancing not merely physically, but emotionally, spiritually, and musically. I am not dancing to the music but with the music. Relaxing my mind has allowed something outside of me to take over and I experience a few precious moments of dance ecstasy.

After class in the locker room I stand in the cold shower, water beating on my face, and weep tears of joy. I know that I am a dancer and have a responsibility to myself to dance, or part of me will shrivel up and blow away. So until I die, I will dance, dance, dance.

— *Darcy Curl*



— *Michelle Hardison*



## *Granddaddy*

Looking across miles of fields  
 I feel as if I can see forever,  
 But what I really want to see is not there—  
 For if it were,  
 I would easily pick it out of the horizon.

I would know it was he,  
 his plaid cap tilted forward  
 and he would be carrying vegetables.  
 When he raises his hand to wave,  
 I am too far to even count the fingers,  
 But I know they are brown and wrinkled and hard  
 From too many years in the sun  
 And too many years of hard work.  
 His walk is slow, but not labored.  
 From what he has taught me  
 I know he is simply admiring  
 what God has blessed him with  
 And it makes me happy to see  
 He's looking at me more than the vegetables.

As he comes closer I can hear his voice  
 And I know it's his  
 Because his simple "hello"  
 Twists around like great big hugs  
 That make me feel at home.

Now I go to the field to remember  
 And think of how things were  
 And I wish just once more  
 I could see the brown, wrinkled hand raise in the distance.

— Mary Jon Sumrell

## *Ace of Hearts*

He's the one you notice first,  
 when you walk into a room.

He's the one you think about,  
 when you're looking at the moon.

He's the one that haunts your dreams,  
 when you turn out your lights.

He's the only star in your sky,  
 when you sit alone on a summer night.

He's a master at his art.  
 He's known to many as the Ace of Hearts.

— Mary Melissa Jeter

*Saying Goodbye*

"He looks good,"  
they quietly say, noting  
the thin, pale body,  
the grey suit,  
and starched shirt  
with empty pockets.  
But I am convinced  
it's not him.  
I see him, though;  
plaid shirt  
with a pocket for  
cigarettes, and the other for  
gum and  
pens.  
The brown belt and  
XXL pants, the  
worn tan shoes  
and the tan hat  
with a feather.

"He rests peacefully,"  
they remark, noting  
the faded smile  
and structured form.  
But I am convinced  
it's not him.  
I see him, though:  
slumped  
in the brand new Lazy-Boy recliner  
smiling and  
waiting  
for me.  
His fat, calloused  
hands  
pull me close  
and his thick  
strong arms  
embrace my body.  
He laughs because  
he knows what I came for —  
gum!

"He didn't suffer,"  
they tell me.



The heart attack  
was  
quick  
and sudden.  
I am glad he felt no  
pain,  
but I did.

Nevertheless,  
I am convinced  
it's not him.  
I see him:  
Driving the  
old, blue truck  
slowly,  
so slowly  
the policeman says  
he is hazardous to  
others.

There he is again;  
in the garden —  
(I knew he was  
there) planting  
tomatoes,  
and cucumbers,  
and cabbage.  
He loves the  
garden. I  
smell him now,  
musk  
and rings under his  
armpits. Yes, it's  
him.

Teary-eyed,  
I see him,  
I say  
I love you and please don't  
leave.

They close the  
lid and he  
is gone, like the cigarette he smoked  
too often, he too  
is soon  
finished, but  
there are no more  
of him.



– Ellen Giard

– Dana Minschew

*Little Things**(For David)*

he does not to be here  
 for me to recall instantly  
 his long, athletic form  
 and blue white jeans  
 and the grey suede bass shoes,  
 his straight brown hair hanging  
 over his glasses,  
 covering his intense blue eyes  
 and his tiny ears.  
 if i saw a letter in my mailbox  
 i'd know it was his handwriting  
 the small, precise, masculine letters  
 the simple, white stationary  
 i'd feel the familiar rush  
 and ritualistically save  
 the letter 'till I could be alone.  
 coming for the telephone  
 i'd know his soft voice  
 and his words would move me  
 like a fast, lilting waltz  
 i'd forget he was in pittsburgh  
 and not in the same room  
 because his caring, friendly heart  
 through conversation  
 would wrap around me  
 like a fur-lined coat  
 tickling laughter  
 and soothing me to comfort.

– Darcy Curl

*Safe*

He's here, by his old white van.  
 Can't you smell his Old Spice  
 combined with the gasoline he's pumped  
 all day  
 down at the McCracken Oil.

See the red and white cigar box  
 poking out of the breast pocket  
 of his blue work shirt.  
 He's even got a cigar in his mouth.

Look, the wind is blowing  
 his snowy hair- well, it's never neat  
 anyway, he's always tousling it.



He'll shake your hand,  
 of course you know his hands will be  
 calloused and dry from years  
 of working on cars.

Now he's smiling,  
 his eyes shine, and the wrinkles are all  
 crumpled together.

Shhh...  
 He's talking.  
 Can't you hear him?  
 His voice is brittle,  
 but  
 warm... That's who you see.

But for me...  
 only me,  
 he holds me on his knobby knees  
 and with his parched hands,  
 grease deep under the nails,  
 strokes my silky, yellow hair,  
 freshly washed in Johnson and Johnson's  
 No More Tears.

"Angel," he says as he kisses the top  
 of my head...  
 And in his feeble arms,  
 I'm safe.

— *Ellen Giard*

### *Dad*

As his figure comes closer into view, I immediately distinguish  
 him from all others.  
 The blue workpants with the hammerholder attached to his belt.  
 His fitted button-up shirt tucked in too much,  
 and his white socks peeking out from underneath  
 those high watered workpants.  
 The way he sways back and forth, swinging his arms as he walks.  
 His Spock ears spotlighted by the sun from behind,  
 and his green workhat covering his receding hairline.  
 He squeezes my shoulders; his hands are rough and strong.  
 As he calls my name from the old, light blue truck,  
 I can hear the sounds of tools clatter  
 as he retrieves them from his long white toolbox.  
 Filling my ears is the dreadful singing of an unknown sixties  
 tune, sending earth-shattering shrieks across the yard.  
 My dad — no doubt.

— *Kimberly Musselwhite*

## *Papa's House*

Remember the rickety old green swing?  
How we sat on it in the twilight.  
And we listened  
to crickets in scratchy green grass  
who sang to us.

Papa's house  
old and white  
flaking paint chips  
everywhere  
sounds of the evening news  
echo through the screened door  
to duet with the crickets.  
And don't forget...  
orange sherbet ice cream  
"Don't eat too fast, you'll get a  
headache"  
Did I listen?  
No.

Days passed  
Weeks passed  
Months passed

Papa's room  
empty;  
No more cigar smoke  
to tickle my nose and water my eyes,  
no more trips to Aunt Fita's  
The old green swing  
sways  
alone  
empty  
like me.

*— Ellen Giard*



## *Inhale*

Cigarette dangles,  
curls of smoke surround me,  
smoke in my eyes, my lungs,  
its smell is in my clothes and all my belongings.  
Smoke envelops me until nothing else is clear  
especially the air.  
Still I smoke until my lips, brown stained from the  
toxic tobacco, match my yellowed fingertips.  
I've been smoking since you left, hoping to drive  
out your smell and  
smoke out your memory.

– *Lindsay Mize*

## *Castles in the Sky*

The day had been pretty eventful, and I had conquered all the rival knights and dragons. It was time to go to my castle and rest among friends. I climbed the steps one by one, making sure not to fall, sat down and, positioning myself just right in my favorite corner, I watched the yard grow darker and felt the wind become cooler. The smell of freshly-lit coals came rolling on the night air from down the street and made me even slip further into my dreamland. Then the front porch light came on and Mom opened the door calling my name: "Ivy, Ivy, dinner's ready. Come in and wash your hands." she'd call to the empty lawn.

I'd call back with the traditional, "Coming," and sit back against the secure branches. I saw and heard everything from up there. I heard dogs barking from miles away and saw older boys on their bikes peddling down the road. They almost collided into each other, trying to look for the sender of the big plums flying through the air. I just laughed as they, "Hey, who did that? You little brat."

I'd just keep laughing, knowing I had one up on them. Just slaying more dragons, that's all. Protecting my castle in the sky from anything that may endanger it.

– *Ivy Slade*

*Night Poems*

1

rain on the main road  
puddles reflect red and green  
against the black night.

2

I know it's late:  
the moon is peppermint candy,  
partially eaten.

3

darkness, darkness, darkness:  
then a sea of glitter;  
all the city lights.

4

there is  
nothing so pure  
as an unbroken sky  
line, an endless horizon for  
Moon.

5

I said  
night is a sigh  
you said, no it's a breath  
we argued in whispers until  
dawn.

6

the breeze  
is warm and lithe  
it sulks in the grass where,  
lying on my back, I count each  
star.

– Rachael Cleverly





– *Ellen Giard*

### *Drought*

I want a glass of water,  
But the well has gone dry.  
So I will sip on my teardrops,  
If I have enough strength to cry.

– *Lindsay Mize*



– *Kathy Templeton*

*The Right to Be Me?  
Echoing Hamlet*

To be me or not to be me: that is the question:  
 It is better in my mind to suffer  
 The name-calling and laughs of the in-crowd,  
 Or to flow with the sea of my papers,  
 Refusing to oppose them all? To be free: to think;  
 No more; by thinking will we be able  
 To stop the laughs and the heart ache?  
 To be myself, I devoutly wish. To be free,  
 To think;  
 To think: perchance to dream: ay, there's my wish;  
 By being me is when my dreams shall come;  
 When we have shed our ignorance,  
 That stops our individuality, there will be the respect  
 That will make us live a peaceful life.  
 Who wants to bear the whips and scorns of words,  
 Our parents' wrong, the proud man's insults  
 The hurt of false, or lost love,  
 The rudeness of authority when they think the lamb has gone  
     astray  
 And what shall happen when that lamb dies,  
 Who shall carry the torch? Who would take the burden of being  
     themselves in this  
 Clone filled world, not to dread other's thoughts,  
 None shall take the same path  
 No one returns, which puzzles the clone and makes them listen  
     to others,  
 Then travel down an unknown highway.  
 Conscience of others does make cowards of us all;  
 So we regress to the way it has always been  
 And makes us sick with the thought,  
 That we could have shone for one moment,  
 But yet we turn away,  
 And lose our name in the crowd — Go you now!  
 To your life! Nymph, of heart  
 May all my dreams be remembered.

— Heather Thomas

## ***AIDS***

*For P.J., Michelle, & The Ham Man*

### Characters:

<u>Name:</u>	<u>Age:</u>	<u>Sex:</u>
Narrator	17-20	M/F
T.J.	17	M
Bridget	10	F
Mike	21	M
Allison	7	F
Alex	35	M/F

### Setting:

The stage is divided into half by an arch. Behind the arch towards the back-drop are gravestones by which the characters stand by when they do their scenes. The front half of the arch is where the action, if any, takes place.

### Costumes:

Everyone but the narrator is in all black with a red ribbon. Their faces and hands are painted white to give them a ghost-like look. The narrator is in all white with a red ribbon.

## ***Scene 1***

### Setting:

The characters are on the front half of the stage with a spotlight coming up on each one as they speak for the first time, staying on until the end. The back half of the stage remains dark.

Narrator: AIDS and HIV — Myths...

T.J.: Only gays get it...

Alex: It won't happen to anyone I know...

Bridget: You can only get it from monkeys...

Mike: I know my partner...

Allison: You can get it through casual contact...

Narrator: AIDS and HIV — Facts...

T.J.: Anyone can get it. Gays, straights, babies, heterosexuals, famous, not famous, blacks, or whites. Anyone...

Alex: When you go to your ten-year high school reunion, more than one-fourth of you will have the disease and half of you may not even know it...



Bridget: You can get it through sex, drugs, blood, mothers can pass it to there babies...

Mike: Do you really know your partner? Do you really know your partners' partners?...

Allison: You can't get it through hugging, caressing, touching, or eating with someone. Not even by living with someone who has the disease...

Narrator: AIDS and HIV — Reality...

T.J.: Magic Johnson.

Alex: Freddie Mercury.

Bridget: Ryan White.

Mike: The guy who was the father on the Brady Bunch: Robert Reed.

Allison: Me.

Narrator: Anyone can get it. **BLACK OUT**

## Scene 2

Setting:

T.J.'s grave. The light comes up on him and he starts his monologue.

T.J.: Life was so simple for me. I was captain of the basketball team, straight A student, every girl wanted to date me, and I wanted to sleep with every girl. Sure I had heard of AIDS, but I thought it was a gay thing or only drug users got it. I never thought I'd get it. I didn't even know I had it until it was too late. When Magic Johnson announced he had full-blown AIDS, I thought "I didn't know he was gay?" That's when my school started educating us on AIDS and how to protect myself. No one listened; you can only watch somebody put a condom on a banana so many times. But then my girlfriend, Michelle, got sick a few days later with a rare case of pneumocystis cillia pneumonia. We were from a small town and people didn't know much about the disease. Nobody in town had the virus, so they didn't test her or think about it when checking her blood. **HE WALKS OVER TO ANOTHER GRAVE AND PUTS FLOWERS DOWN BY IT.** She died a few months later. Then when I was away at a basketball tournament, I got injured. When I was rushed to the hospital and my blood was taken, they found it immediately. I had full-blown AIDS. I didn't want anyone to know, but they told my parents. My parents took it hard. I was their only child and I was going to die. I had to tell all the girls I had ever been with and they had to be tested. Two of the other girls had it as well. Before I knew it, a town with a population of 750 people, almost a hundred had

the disease and no one knows how it started. I wrote a letter to Magic saying he was my hero more than ever, and I apologized for all the things I ever thought about him after he was diagnosed. I never saw the response he sent me. I died a few days before I was supposed to graduate. Someone once asked me if I could live my life over knowing, what I know, would I do it. I thought about it for awhile and I would. But the one lesson I learned was to always use protection. The myths about condoms and how they don't feel like the real thing or I 'm healthy, I don't have any diseases — How do you think it feels when you're dead? **BLACK OUT**

**Narrator:** **LIGHTS COME UP ON NARRATOR IN FRONT OF GRAVE.**

Most of the cases didn't think they could get HIV or AIDS. A person who is infected may not look or act sick so you aren't able to tell. This is one way it gets spread to other people. But if the virus is detected early, a person can stop spreading the virus and get help and medicine. Though there is no cure for AIDS at the time, medicines such as AZT can slow down the process and help victims live a longer, almost normal life. The only one hundred percent way to protect yourself is abstinence, but if you choose to have sex, use a condom. If you shoot drugs, make sure you use a clean and sterile needle and don't share needles. And get tested regularly. **BLACK OUT**

### **Scene 3**

**Setting:**

Bridget's grave. The lights come up as she starts to speak.

**Bridget:** I'm dead because someone maybe you was careless. I'm a child that died because of someone's stupid mistake. I'm ten years old, and I died of AIDS. This is my cry for help. Please listen. No, I wasn't gay, or used drugs, and I was too young to have sex, so how did I get the virus you ask? I was four years old when I was in a traffic accident that almost killed me. Because of my rare blood type, they put out an emergency phone call for anyone who had my blood type. They found a match, but there was no time for screening. The blood was infected with HIV. I didn't know the person who had the virus; all I know is I died and it's their fault. The donor may not have known he or she had the virus, or maybe they did. But now, a child died because of this mistake. I never got to do all the things I wanted to do like get married, have children, and live a long and happy life. I'll never do any of those things. Never! If you're sexually active or do drugs, please get tested. If you know you have HIV or AIDS, please don't spread the virus any more. Protect yourself. Don't do to others what others have done to me. This is my cry for help. Please listen! **BLACK OUT**

**LIGHTS COME UP ON NARRATOR WALKING TOWARDS THE GRAVE**

Narrator: Since 1987, all blood donated has been tested, but in some rare cases, less than one percent of victims still contract the virus this way. Donating blood, plasma, or anything else is not a way of being tested and you can not get HIV or AIDS by donating blood. All needles are sterile and are thrown away after use. But in rare cases such as this one, safety measures were not taken. So if you've had a transfusion before 1987, please be tested. Don't let another child like Bridget suffer. **BLACK OUT**

### Scene 4

Setting:

Mike's grave. Lights go on as he speaks.

Mike: I was 15 years old when I "came out of the closet." I had always felt an attraction towards boys and men, but that night at a party, I literally came out of the closet. A group of us were playing Seven Minutes in Heaven and as a joke, I was sent into the closet with Carl. It was my first homosexual experience even though we just kissed, but when our time was up, I realized I was gay. Only my family knew the truth until I was seventeen and met Chris. He was my first lover, and he showed me what love was in a way I could never imagine. Two years later I was with James. James was bisexual and was more of a friend to me than a lover. But when he died a few months later of AIDS, I was scared. I was tested immediately and the test showed a negative result. I had never been so happy in all of my life. After that, I always used protection. Until the night at the bar. **SITS IN FRONT OF GRAVE WITH LEGS FOLDED TO HIS CHEST.** One night I went to a gay bar with some friends and had a few too many drinks. I had a one-night stand with some guy that I didn't even know his name. Neither of us used protection, and this time the result showed positive for HIV. I died a year later due to complications from ARC-AIDS Related Complex. **BLACK OUT**

**CROSSES TO GRAVE PLACING FLOWERS NEXT TO IT AS LIGHTS COME UP**

Narrator: ARC affects people with HIV who do not yet have the AIDS virus. It's a combination of weight loss, fever, and enlarged lymph nodes. Even though homosexual men are one of the leading groups to contract the virus, lesbians can also pass the virus to each other. **BLACK OUT**

### Scene 5

Setting:

Allison's grave. In front half of stage, a few incubators. **BLACK OUT**

Allison: I never met my mother, she died after I was born. Some mothers die of complications during child birth. Mine died from AIDS. And so did I.



My mother was a poor runaway who spent her mid-teens to late twenties working as a prostitute. Who knows how she got the virus, and who knows how many, besides me, she spread it too. When she found out she was pregnant, she quit work, hoping to make a better life for herself and her unborn child. Five months later, I was born and an incubator became my mother. Being so premature, I was lucky to be alive. **WALKS AROUND LOOKING IN THE INCUBATORS.** Not all babies are that lucky. And not all babies with HIV mothers get the virus either. Like I said, I was a “lucky” one. Anyway, I lived until I was seven and went through more pain and misery than you can imagine. Now I have no pain and misery. I just wish I could say that about the other “lucky” ones. **BLACK OUT**

**Narrator: PUTTING A TEDDY BEAR NEXT TO THE GRAVE WITH A RED RIBBON ON IT AS THE LIGHTS COME UP.** This is one of the most unfair ways of contracting the virus. Innocent children die every day who received the virus from their mother before, during, or after childbirth, through breast feeding. There are no ways to protect your unborn child if you have the virus, but if you do have the virus and are pregnant, see a doctor or counseling for help soon. **BLACK OUT**

### **Scene 6**

**Setting:**

Alex's grave. Light go on as he speaks.

**Alex:** Just say no! If I had heard that when I was a teen, I would have died laughing. **LAUGHS HILARIOUSLY AND THEN SUDDENLY STOPS.** But if had I known then what I know now, I would've said no. It started twenty years ago with my first sip of beer. Actually, it was my first six pack of beer. Then I smoked pot, tried LSD, and then did cocaine and heroin. The injecting drugs were the best! I was never scared of needles as a kid, so stabbing myself in my arm several times a day didn't bother me. I could've cared less where the needle had been or if it was clean, as long as I could get that rush as soon as possible. But then about ten years ago, I noticed these blue, red, and purple splotches all over my legs and arms. They were the size of dimes. I just figured it was scars of all the places I had poked myself. But when I was arrested and sent to a rehab center, my physical showed that I had Kaposi's Sarcoma, which is a type of cancer found in AIDS patients. The last five years of my life, I spent going around to different schools telling about the dangers of drugs and how my life had changed overnight. Boy, has my life changed. **BLACK OUT**

**Narrator:** Almost 30% of the people infected with HIV and AIDS transmit the virus by sharing needles. IV users should avoid sharing needles and just say no! Many clinics will test drug users for free. A few clinics in the country will even give out clean sterile needles and syringes in hopes that the users will stop the spread of the virus. **BLACK OUT**

## **Scene 7**

### **Setting:**

The characters are on the front half of the stage as they were in scene 1. This time, the spotlight goes off each one on their last line. The back half of the stage remains dark.

### **Narrator: AIDS and HIV — Facts...**

**T.J.:** There are many ways to show affection without having sex. Touching, hugging, kissing, etc. If you do have sex, make responsible choices — use a condom every time!

**Alex:** Do just say no! AIDS is caused by the virus entering the bloodstream. Using infected and contaminated needles and syringes just makes it that much easier. Don't share needles!

**Bridget:** If there's a chance you'll be getting a transfusion, or if you ever have to, make sure the blood you are given has been tested. It's your body, and you have the right to know.

**Mike:** Don't be shy about asking your partners about their sex life. And never mix alcohol with sex. It blurs your sense of reasoning.

**Allison:** If you're pregnant with the virus, think about your alternatives. Ask your doctors. They're there to help you.

### **Narrator: AIDS and HIV — Help...**

**T.J.:** There is no cure yet, but drugs such as AZT or Dideoxycytidine will help slow down the process, and maybe prolong your life.

**Alex:** There are places you can go for help. Your doctor, a counselor, friends, family, even support groups.

**Bridget:** Not all people look at AIDS the same way. Many have their own views based on personal beliefs and rumors.

**Mike:** Research is being done every day and more discoveries are being made in order to find a cure.

**Allison:** Since there is no cure yet, prevention lies in the hands of the humans with knowledge. For more info, call 1-800-342-AIDS.

**All:** Please learn more!

### **Narrator: AIDS and HIV — Reality...**

**T.J.:** Arthur Ashe. **SPOT OUT**

Alex: Liberace. SPOT OUT

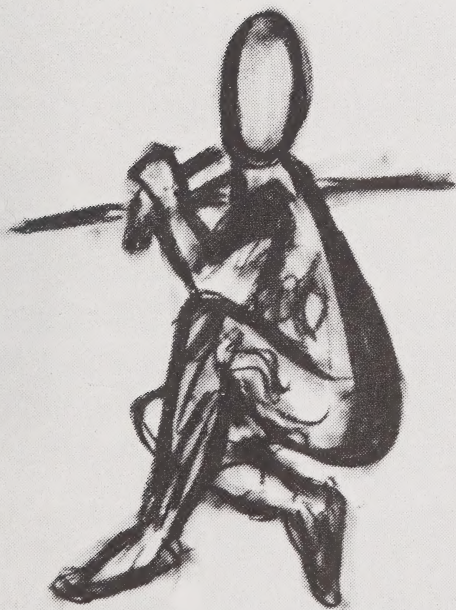
Bridget: The girl who got it from her dentist — Allison McDonough. SPOT  
OUT

Mike: Rock Hudson. SPOT OUT

Allison: Us. SPOT OUT

Narrator: Anyone can get it. BLACK OUT

— Jen Thraikill



— Leslie Griffin









